

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please CANCEL claims 2, 5, 6, 9, 11, 17, 19, 20, 26, and 28 without prejudice to or disclaimer of their subject matter. Please AMEND claims 1, 8, 14, and 18, as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeding device comprising:

a plurality of sheet trays which are vertically disposed for storing sheets

horizontally;

a plurality of sheet feeding means for respectively feeding sheets stored in the plurality of sheet trays;

a plurality of transport paths for respectively transporting the sheets fed by the plurality of sheet feeding means,

a primary transport path into which the plurality of transport paths flow,

wherein a sheet feeding direction of sheets fed from one of the plurality of sheet trays by one of the plurality of sheet feeding means is a direction opposite to a sheet feeding direction of sheets fed from the other sheet trays by the other sheet feeding means, ~~and~~

a sheet transport direction of the sheet which is transported from one of said plurality of transport paths into said primary transport path at an interflow position and a sheet transport direction of the sheet which is transported from the other transport paths into said primary transport path at an interflow position are the same[[]],

wherein one of said plurality of sheet trays and one of said plurality of sheet transport paths are disposed above said primary transport path, and

wherein the other of sheet tray and the other transport path are disposed below said primary transport path.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) A sheet feeding device according to Claim 1, wherein the primary transport path includes sheet reversing means for reversing front and back sides of sheets.

4. (Previously Presented) A sheet feeding device according to Claim 1, wherein the sheet feeding means feeds sheets from the sheet trays to insert the sheets between two of a plurality of sheets transported from an image formation apparatus.

5-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeding device comprising:
a pair of feeding trays which are vertically disposed and store sheets horizontally;
a pair of sheet feeding units, each disposed adjacent a respective one of the pair of sheet feeding trays;
a pair of transport paths respectively connected to the pair of sheet feeding units; and

a primary transport path into which said pair of transport paths flow,
wherein a sheet feeding direction of each of the pair of sheet feeding units is
opposite to the other of the pair of sheet feeding units, and
a sheet transport direction of the sheet which is transported from one of said
pair of sheet transport paths into said primary transport path at an interflow position and a sheet
transport direction of a sheet which is transported from the other transport path into said primary
transport path at an interflow position are the same direction[[]],
wherein one of said pair of sheet trays and one of said pair of sheet transport
paths is disposed above said primary transport path, and
wherein the other of sheet tray and the other transport path is disposed below
said primary transport path.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Presented) A sheet post-processing system comprising:
a sheet feeding device according to Claim 1; and
a sheet post-processing device adapted to perform post-processing on sheets
discharged from the sheet feeding device.

11-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously Presented) An image formation system comprising:

an image formation apparatus for forming images on sheets;

a sheet feeding device according to Claim 1 for inserting sheets between two of a plurality of sheets on which images are formed by the image formation apparatus; and

a sheet post-processing device which is disposed downstream in a sheet transport direction of said image formation apparatus, said sheet post-processing device performing post-processing on sheets on which images are formed by the image formation apparatus or on sheets fed by the sheet feeding device.

14. (Currently Amended) An image formation system ~~according to Claim 13, further comprising:~~

an image formation apparatus for forming images on sheets;

a sheet feeding device for inserting sheets between two of a plurality of sheets on which images are formed by the image formation apparatus;

said sheet feeding device comprising a plurality of sheet trays which are vertically disposed for storing sheets,

a plurality of sheet feeding means for respectively feeding sheets stored in the plurality of sheet trays,

a plurality of transport paths for respectively transporting the sheets fed by the plurality of sheet feeding means,

a primary transport path into which the plurality of transport paths flow,

wherein a sheet feeding direction of sheets fed from one of the plurality of sheet trays by one of the plurality of sheet feeding means is a direction opposite to a sheet feeding direction of sheets fed from the other sheet trays by the other sheet feeding means, and

a sheet transport direction of the sheet which is transported from one of said plurality of transport paths into said primary transport path at an interflow position and a sheet transport direction of the sheet which is transported from the other transport paths into said primary transport path at an interflow position are the same;

a sheet post-processing device which is disposed downstream in a sheet transport direction of said image formation apparatus, said sheet post-processing device performing post-processing on sheets on which images are formed by the image formation apparatus and sheets fed by the sheet feeding device; and

control means for selecting a sheet feeding means from the plurality of sheet feeding means depending on ~~whether the selected post-processing mode so that said sheet post-processing device can perform post-processing of the sheets without reversal of the sheet is a post-processing mode in which sheets are transported in a face-up state to the sheet post-processing device or a post-processing mode in which sheets are transported in a face-down state to the sheet post-processing device.~~

15. (Previously Presented) An image formation system according to Claim 13, wherein the sheet feeding device is detachably mounted on one of the image formation apparatus and the sheet post-processing device.

16. (Previously Presented) An image formation system according to Claim 13, further comprising:

an upstream side sheet feeding device located on an upstream side in the sheet feeding direction of the image formation apparatus for feeding sheets to the image formation apparatus,

wherein said upstream side sheet feeding device and said sheet feeding device have the same configuration.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) An image formation system ~~according to Claim 17, further~~ comprising:

an image formation apparatus for forming images on sheets;

a sheet feeding device for inserting sheets between two of a plurality of sheets on which images are formed by the image formation apparatus, said sheet feeding device comprising,

a sheet tray for storing sheets,

two sheet feeding means for feeding sheets stored on the sheet trays,

two transport paths for respectively transporting sheets fed by said two sheet feeding means,

a primary transport path into which said two transport paths flow,
wherein each of said two sheet feeding means feeds sheets from the sheet tray in a direction opposite
to the other, and

a sheet transport direction of the sheet which is transported from one of said
two sheet transport paths into said primary transport path at an interflow position and a sheet
transport direction of a sheet which is transported from the other transport path into said primary
transport path at an interflow position are the same direction;

a sheet post-processing device disposed downstream in the sheet transport
direction of said image formation apparatus, said sheet post-processing device performing post-
processing on sheets on which images are formed by the image formation apparatus and on
sheets fed by the sheet feeding device, and

control means for selecting a sheet feeding means from the two sheet feeding
means to feed sheets from the sheet tray depending on ~~whether~~ the selected post-processing mode
so that said sheet post-processing device can perform post-processing of the sheets without
reversal of the sheet ~~is a post-processing mode in which sheets are transported in a face-up state~~
~~or a post-processing mode in which sheets are transported in a face-down state.~~

19-24. (Cancelled)

25. (Previously Presented) A sheet feeding device according to claim 1,
further comprising control means for selecting a sheet feeding means from the plurality of sheet
feeding means depending on whether sheets are transported in a face-up state on said primary

transport path or in a face-down state on said primary transport path.

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Previously Presented) A sheet feeding device according to claim 8, further comprising control means for selecting a sheet feeding means from said pair of sheet feeding means depending on whether sheets are transported in face-up state on said primary transport path or in a face-down state on said primary transport path.

28. (Cancelled)